

# WANDERERS SET TO TAKE OVER AT THE TOP

AS Wycombe Wanderers were completing a mammoth 15-0 Rothmans Isthmian League double over bottom - of - the - table Bromley on Tuesday night, the Division One leaders Enfield were held to a surprise 0-0 draw by Slough Town at Southbury Road. And so, for the first time for several months, the Blues are now in a position to take over at the top of the table.

The situation now is this. Enfield have played 39 games for 88 points while Wanderers have a match in hand which, if they won it, would put them two points clear. Dagenham meanwhile, who could well prove to be greater danger to Wycombe, have two games in hand over the Blues which would put them one point behind. Thanks to Tuesday's 8-0 triumph, Wanderers now have the best goal average of the three clubs chasing the championship.

## By STUART EARP Wycombe Wanderers 8, Bromley 0

As long as Wycombe keep on winning, they will take the title — their fourth in five years, which would be an almost unparalleled record. They have only one more away game, at Tooting, and bearing in mind their two year unbeaten home record, they now look favourites for the title. Obviously the home games against Enfield and Dagenham are going to determine the championship once and for all. I think Wanderers have the confidence, skill and the 'big match' nerves to do it. We shall see and even if they don't Wycombe fans can hardly be disappointed after their epic F.A. Cup run.

As expected, Bromley were well and truly thrashed by the champions at Loakes Park. Having already crashed to their heaviest league defeat of the season at home to Wycombe a few weeks ago (7-0), they were once again completely destroyed by Wanderers' superior skills and power. Keith Searle and Dylan Evans were

the destroyers-in-chief, both grabbing hat-tricks.

This was Keith's third hat-trick in a month and his second against the Kent club this term — a tribute to his marked improvement. For Dylan, this was also a fine performance and one that went a long way to justifying his preference to Steve Perrin in the side. Veteran Tony Horseman hit the other two goals.

Bromley, who had conceded over 100 goals before Tuesday's match, were in trouble even before the kick off. Three of their players were late arriving but they managed to take the field just after 7.30. In all, there were nine changes from the team printed in the programme which gives you some idea of their team problems.

### SEVEN WANTED

Wanderers had goalkeeper John Maskell back between the posts as the Blues set out to hit the seven goals they needed to give them a superior goal

average to Enfield. They didn't have to wait long for what was to be their biggest win for three years.

After only four minutes of the match, Howard Kennedy drove in a shot from the edge of the box. Searle flicked out a boot at the ball and deflected it past the stranded John Macrae in goal to open Wycombe's account. Five minutes later it was 2-0. This time Horseman curled over a corner and Keith soared up at the near post to tuck a header into the net — a perfect goal but one that exposed the deficiencies in the visitors' defence.

Even in these early stages, the difference in class was clearly apparent. Wycombe's superior skills saw them tear apart Bromley's flimsy barriers and at times it seemed the Blues were almost lining up to score. The third goal came in the 13th minute when Searle completed his rapid hat-trick. Mick Holfield slanted the ball across the box to the centre forward who took the ball wide before

screwing a shot back past Macrae.

Wycombe's defence, of course, had things virtually all their own way. Gary Hand was particularly impressive at left back while John Maskell watched intently and obliged only with the occasional back pass. The only danger to Wanderers were themselves. At times, they made it look so ridiculously easy but one or two players got carried away and tried to do too much with the inevitable result.

Wycombe's superiority was demonstrated in the fourth goal after 27 minutes. Searle and Horseman combined with the latter slipping the ball to Evans on the left. By this time, the Bromley defence had been totally split and Evans had time to simply walk the ball home from eight yards.

Over-confidence robbed Wycombe of further goals before half time but the fans did not have to wait long before the Blues goal scoring machine produced the goods yet again. In the 54th minute Evans rose high to nod home Searle's overhead kick, Dylan beating Macrae to the ball with ease.

Horseman, top goal scorer with 31 before this match, made it six, three minutes later. Alan Phillips showed the skills of a forward in beating three defenders on the trot and then steering the ball through to Horseman. "Bodger" bore down on goal but was sent stumbling by Gerry Osbourne. Referee Core had no doubt about the decision and although Macrae guessed the right way, Horseman's penalty was too well placed.

Evans twice went close to his hat-trick while Bill Hardy, an ex-Corinthian Casuals player, brought Maskell into action for a change at the outer end. For a time, Wanderers lapsed into individualism as players tried to go it alone but Bromley were not the team to take advantage.

The Blues rattled in two more goals before the close — the best of the match. The first came in the 79th minute. Searle did well to turn a difficult ball back from the bye-line to Evans. He laid it into the path of Horseman who gave Macrae no chance with a curling drive, right into the roof of the net.

Two minutes later Steve Perrin, who had earlier replaced Kennedy, back-headed Horseman's corner onto Evans who raced in to crack a glorious first-time half-volley past Macrae for number eight.

In the closing seconds Bromley were given their first corner by Phillips but that "triumph" was about all they were going to achieve on this occasion. All credit should go to these 11 players, however, for they never stopped running throughout the match whereas many others would have given up the ghost long ago.

**WYCOMBE:** J. Maskell; P. Birdseye, K. Mead, A. Phillips, G. J. O. Kennedy (sub S. Perrin 77 mins), T. Reardon, M. Holfield; A. Horseman, K. Searle, D. Evans.

**BROMLEY:** J. Macrae; B. Messom, S. Parkes, D. Butterfill, M. Miles; A. Charlton, A. Cullenden, G. Osbourne; W. Hardy, K. Edwards, R. Head. Sub. A. Hawkins (not used).

**Referee:** A. Core (Essex).

**Half-time:** 0-0. **Goal scorers:** Wycombe — Searle 3 (4,9,13), Evans 3 (27,54,81), Horseman 2 (57, 79).

**Official paying attendance:** 1,625. **Approximate total attendance:** 1,900.